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**PHOTOGRAPHIC
INTERPRETATION
REPORT**

**NATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC
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ARMED FORCES TRAINING ACTIVITY IN SYRIA

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ARMED FORCES TRAINING ACTIVITY, SYRIA

ABSTRACT

1. This report describes and illustrates varied types of armed forces training activity in Syria, as observed on satellite photography [redacted] Two training exercises were seen in progress: 1) a combined arms assault exercise and 2) a combat assault exercise using helicopters. Training facilities observed included a bombing target range, a moving target tank range, infantry training areas, and a large artillery training area. 25X1

INTRODUCTION

2. [redacted] provided complete coverage of western Syria and made possible an overview of the type and extent of armed forces training activity in Syria. Although military training facilities were previously observed in Syria, no extensive training by the Syrians had been noted. 25X1

3. Large training exercises, probably offensive rather than defensive in nature, were observed in the areas around Damascus and Dara and in northern Syria. Various types of military training facilities, which are dispersed throughout Syria, were also seen. Figure 1 locates the training exercises and various types of training facilities that are included in this report.

BASIC DESCRIPTION

Combined Arms Assault Exercise (Figure 2)

4. Three columns of armored vehicles consisting of tanks, armored personnel carriers, and MTU portable short gap bridges, were observed approximately 20 nautical miles (nm) southeast of Damascus preparing a frontal assault across a simulated Israeli antitank ditch, such as is found in the Israeli-Occupied Golan Heights. Artillery support was provided from 15 tactically deployed guns, with two batteries forward and one battery in reserve. Additional artillery was being brought forward in a "leapfrog" manner.

5. A three-lane moving target tank range, similar to the one south of the assault exercise area (Figure 2), is described below.

Bombing and Strafing Targets

6. A close air support exercise was being conducted simultaneously at a bombing target area (Figure 3) approximately 5 nm west of the combined arms assault exercise. The target area included 12 aircraft silhouettes and a bombing cross within a circle, at the intersection of two simulated runways. The aircraft silhouettes were designed to simulate F-4, A-4, and MIRAGE aircraft. Ten vehicles in two columns of three, and two columns of two, were probable strafing targets. Four FAGOT/FRESCO aircraft (not shown graphically) had apparently just made a bombing run on the target area when observed. Smoke from exploded ordnance is visible on the photo (Figure 3).

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FIGURE 1. LOCATION MAP

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HIP-C Combat Assault Exercise (Figure 4)

7. A probable combat assault exercise involving six HIP-C helicopters was observed at Humaymim Airfield [] 10 nm southeast of the port of Latakia. The helicopters were positioned in a staggered left formation. Six possible troop-carrying cargo trucks, one possible armored personnel carrier, and one IL-14 aircraft were also observed at this airfield.

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Moving Target Tank Range (Figure 5)

8. The moving target tank range at Dhunaybah Army Barracks [] is typical of those found in Syria. The range consists of three parallel firing lanes, extending from the support area approximately 300 meters (984 feet) toward the target area. The target area consists of four moving target lanes, three parallel lanes that extend diagonally approximately 200 meters (656 feet), and one that extends horizontally across the outer ends of the three parallel lanes. Tanks and targets were on the range when it was observed. The support area consists of a control tower, one or two possible ammunition pickup points, and a probable maintenance facility, all at the range entrance.

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Infantry Training Facilities (Figure 6)

9. Infantry training areas are dispersed throughout Syria. Several were observed immediately west of Dara, where Dara Military Barracks [], a typical infantry training area (Figure 6), is located.

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10. Facilities in that area include an infantry personnel trench assault course with four personnel trenches, seven foxhole-like positions, and a small support area; another infantry assault course, consisting of four lanes with obstacles for training in fire and maneuver tactics (this appears to be a live-ammunition range); five small-arms firing ranges; a driver training course; and a physical training field.

Artillery Training (Figure 7)

11. Examples of typical Syrian artillery training facilities (Figure 7) are located in the vicinity of, and are associated with, Al Qutafah Army Barracks [] (The barracks area is not shown on the graphic.) At least seven six-gun training sites were in this area.

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12. A prime mover/infiltration course located in the area has several lanes by which vehicles maneuver through numerous craters made by expended ordnance. The presence of personnel trenches within the course indicates that it could be used as an infiltration course, with craters equipped with artillery simulators.

13. Driver training courses, numerous vehicle storage revetments, and gun emplacements are dispersed throughout the area.

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